

TEJON TRIBE OF INDIANS
MEETING WITH THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY'S OFFICE AND THE SOLICITOR'S OFFICE
SEPTEMBER 29, 2009

<u>TAB</u>	<u>Document</u>
A	Maps of Tejon Ranch and picture of Chairwoman.
B	1915 Terrell Census.
C	Article of Mr. Montes funeral.
D	Timeline of Request to Interior
E	Royce Map showing area relinquished and reserved in 1851 Treaty.
F	Terrell Report on conditions of Tejon Tribe, with census.
G	Secretarial Order establishing Tejon Reservation for Tribe.
H	Excerpts from United States' land claim litigation on behalf of Tejon Tribe.
I	Tejon School Pictures
J	1950s List of California Indian Reservations
K	Pictures of earthquake damage to Tribe's homes on Tejon Ranch.
L	1962 Secretarial Order restoring reservation to public domain.
M	Photos of current tribal members.
N	BIA Chart summarizing Certificates of Degree of Indian Blood
O	Chart summarizing information on members of one-half or more Indian blood.
P	Pictures of Tejon Cemetery
Q	Support for recognition.

F

(El Tapan Indians)

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

(115424-15)

San Francisco, Calif. Dec. 12, 1913

Commissioner Indian Affairs,
Washington, D.C.

*Already
sufficiently answered in Land
Train to
Fair*

Regarding to letter from the Office of, Nov. 25, 1913,
addressed to Mr. Harry Chandler of the Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles,
California, a copy kindly furnished me, relative to the above named
Indians, have the honor to advise that during my recent trip through
Imperial and Kern County, California, enroute to Los Angeles, in the
company of the "Los Angeles Times" of Kings County, having been informed
that the Tapan Indians had not and were not receiving proper
attention and manager of the land on which their ranches
were located, it seemed advisable to stop off and investigate.

I have from carbon letter above referred to sent the Office
in receipt of various communications from citizens of
Imperial and Kern County, California, that present owners of land are not
treating these Indians. I am not advising as to nature and extent of
the same, however, regret to say that my investigation made during
the trip, having visited many ranches and carefully gone through
the same, such cases, caused me to conclude the citizens of
Imperial and Kern County have been fully justified in calling the Office to
the attention of these Indians. My auto in company with Mr. J. J.
Hartfield, the auto driver and an Indian, I visited this ranch
which is situated about 40 miles to the south or slightly to the
west of the Imperial River, where it is to be understood
that the Indians are now located.

Page 2 -

being very little furniture of any kind and exceedingly scant of both bedding and clothing. The extent of the enclosed and used lands of these Indians will not exceed 15 acres, consisting of 8 or 10 small patches, the largest being that of the Chief, Juan Lozada, who has about $\frac{3}{4}$ acres in his enclosure, the others ranging from $\frac{1}{4}$ to about one acre, likely averaging $\frac{1}{2}$ acre, given chiefly to garden uses, the the Chief has grown during the past year some native hay and has about $\frac{1}{2}$ acre in alfalfa.

My information was that under orders of the ranch manager, J. J. Lopez, these Indians have not and will not in the future be permitted to increase their live-stock holding to any extent, not even sheep, goats or hogs. They have a few horses, comparatively few, not exceeding 10 head, of which only 6 or 7 of any serviceable value. There is not a milk cow on the rancharia, and was told by the Indians they are not permitted to own cattle. That during the past summer they were ordered not to take water from the company ditch to irrigate their gardens.

The Catholic people have built for these Indians a very neat little house for religious worship, but according to information of the Chief and Mr. Cantor, its door has been closed and locked against these people for some time. There is centrally built a very neat little school house, erected by the County, but being denied the advantage of a school this year on account of the orders of Lopez, since the recent burning of Chief Lozada's cabin home, has only been occupied by him. Lumber sent by the County this year to add to or in some way improve the school house has not and will not be used, having been recently sold, on account, of opposition of the manager, who evidently acts under instructions from ranch owners.

Prof. R. L. Stockton, ex-Supt. of Schools, resident of Bakersfield,

advises me that during his administration Lopez attempted to prevent the building of a school on the Indian rancharia.

Page 3.

that he became so persistent in his opposition that he told him if he further interfered that he would have him arrested!

The night before leaving Bakersfield I called on the present Supt. Public Schools to learn why no school by the County has for some time not been carried on for these Indians, and was informed by him that it was the opposition of the ranch owners through their manager, Lopez. This manager acting under instructions from the ranch owners by repeated and persistent efforts has, I was informed, caused every except the Chief, Indian, representing the head of a family or living in any one of the cabin homes to sign some character of agreement or lease contract, which I suppose is intended more as recognition of the rights of the owners and an estoppel to the Indian setting up any claim to the land, than any thing else. The older Indians of this band have not entirely abandoned the conviction that they have a legal right to the land on which their old village was situated. The following type-written notice

was through Lopez served on Chief Lozada, viz: "June 28, 1915. To Juan Lozada (Chief) Tejon
You are hereby notified not to put any improvements, or buildings, or structures of any kind upon any of the lands and premises of the Tejon Ranch or Company, unless you sign a lease with them and permission is given you to so do- Tejon Ranch Co. by J.J. Lopez, Manager."

The recent burning at night of Lozada's home during his and his wife's absence in Bakersfield and the serving of this notice causes he and the other Indians to believe the ranch people are responsible for the burning of his house. Castro also shares in this conviction.

Through Castro and the Chief learn that the ranch owners give employment to from 8 to 12 of the most able-bodied of these Indians for from 2 to 3 months during each year, paying a nominal wage, slightly less than is usually paid for such work, and that 2 to 3 have work on the ranch nearly the entire year. These Indians taken as a whole are mentally rather weak, with possible exception of the Chief, and therefore more easily imposed upon. As I noted the situation, so long as through 1/6

their present manager these Indians may be kept envired, controlled and used as in the past, there is not the remotest probability of the present owners of the ranch desiring to make any change which will effect adversely the interests of the Tejon Indians?

As I see it, these Indians have proven more of an asset to this ranch than a disadvantage. I am confident not a single Indian has every been employed by the ranch owners until needed and only kept in service as long as their interests suggested, and I am reasonably certain that no better wages^{have} been paid them than paid for similar work elsewhere. This ranch consists of over 200,000 acres, and the Indian rancheria situated as it is therein, hardly mentally capacitated to protect himself against impositions, far removed from white friends who might see and protect him, denied the possibility of ever increasing his holdings, in that these ranch owners, as I understand, refuse to sell ⁿ any part of their holdings for a permanent home for these people, nor, under present successful management, can he hope for a school for his children, causes me to conclude that these Indians should be removed entirely off this company land as soon as possible.

During my short stay in Bakersfield in efforts to secure reliable information concerning these Indians, after first meeting Castro, who was suggested to me as the best and most valuable friend to these people, at his suggestion I called upon Mr. R. McDonald, editor of one of the papers, 1723 Chester Ave., E. J. Emmons, Atty. in Producers Bank Building, Judge H. A. Peairs, Judge of the Superior Court, Prof. R. L. Stockton and some few others. All of these gentlemen expressed the opinion, though with some such opinion was reached largely from other than actual personal knowledge, that these Indians have not in the past met with just, fair and humane treatment, some seemingly believing that their present condition^{is} little short of peonage.

117

Page 5.

It is with deep regret that duty as I understand it, for I feel that the Office ^{should} hear what I have heard, forces me to report the most serious charge yet mentioned. The man, T.C. Castro, who has spent considerable of his time among these Indians, has known the band all his life, speaks their language as well or better than they do, makes no secret in the charge that during the past several years this man Lopez, who, has been on this ranch for the past 35 or 40 years, since company ownership as ranch manager, has so managed as to be able to take unlawful and unholy advantage of a number of the young and most prepossessing girls of this band, accomplishing his unholy deeds, ^{Castro} insist, about the period of their reaching young womanhood, or soon thereafter.

I made mention of this serious charge to Judge Peairs, who had to say that while he had heard these charges, and that Castro had discussed the same with him, yet he could conclude they have every reached such nature as to be susceptible of proof in court. The remoteness of the Indian rancheria and the ignorance of these people make them easy victims of wicked designing men.

Both Mr Emmons and Mr. McDonald have promised to try and find some suitable location for these Indians to the east, up the creek outside of the ranch company enclosure, and write me results of their efforts.

Mr McDonald expressed the conviction that such place could be found, and that ^{these} people should be removed as soon as possible.

I shall write both he and Mr. Emmons within the nex few days.

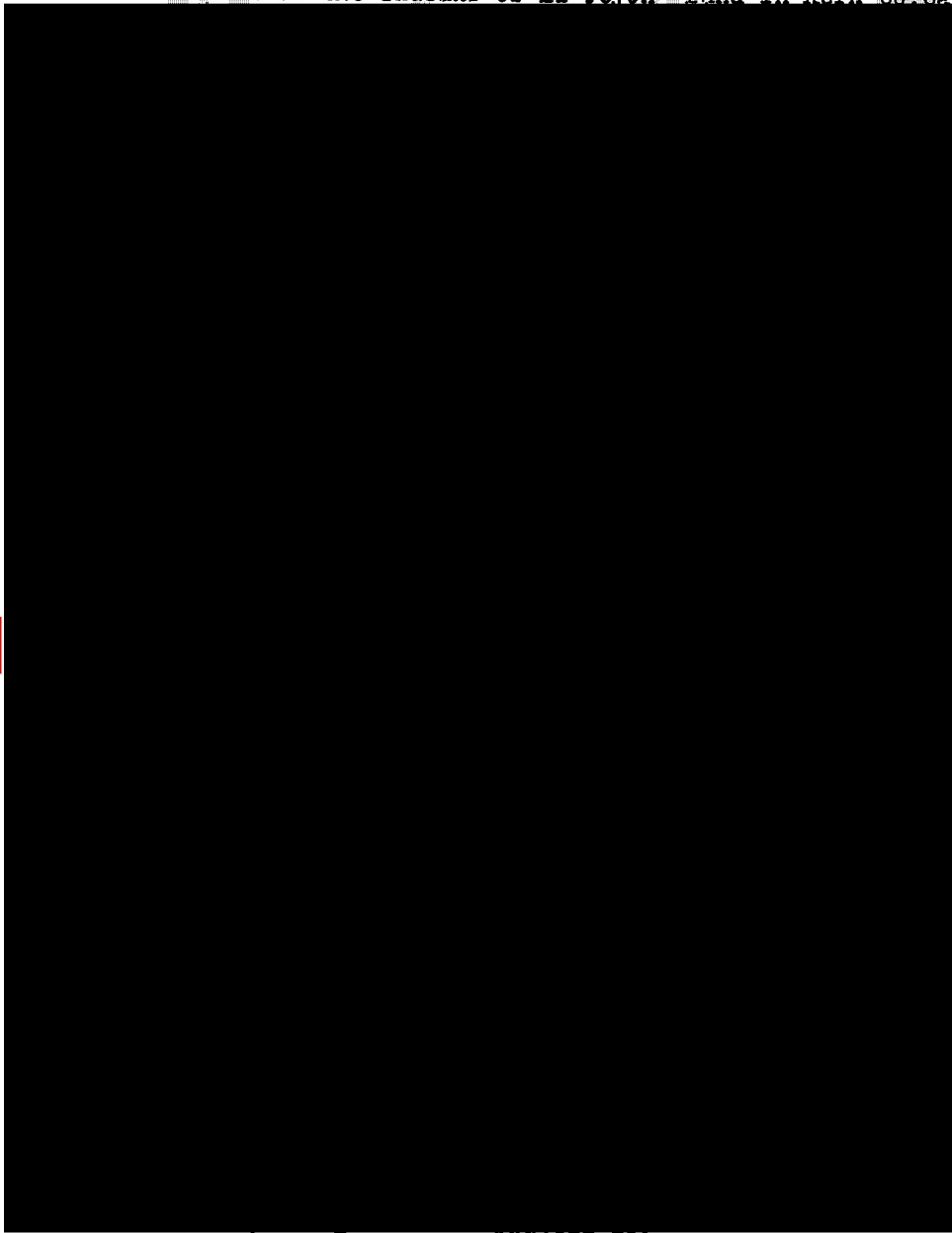
If not under present appropriation, then would suggest that under next, this Indians should have first relief from their present unfortunate environments.

Very respectfully,


Special Indian Agent.

(See Census hereto attached, numberng a total of 79.)

Census of the Indians of El Tejon Band In Kern Co. Calif.



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7.

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Total, 79.

Respectfully submitted,

John J. Terrell
Special Indian Agent.

Payable

119

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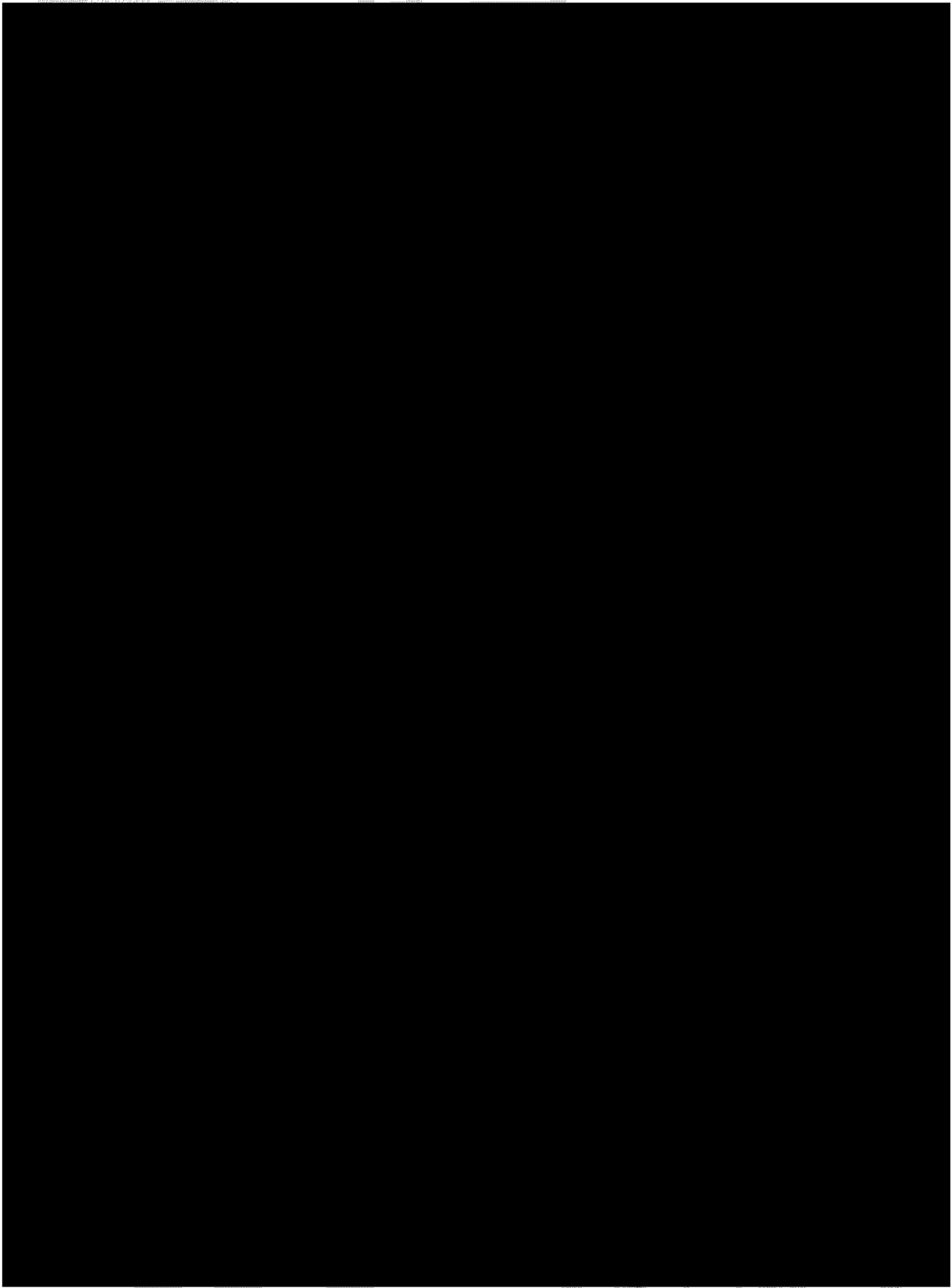


PHOTO OF CHIEF [REDACTED]
TAKEN BY EDWARD S. CURTIS, ABOUT 1916